

Abstract of the Disclosure

A system of bill presentment and bill payment. The parties to the process, which typically include the bill presenter, bill payer, and bank, credit card company or other intermediary, select from a number of choices in the selection of information to include in the bill, preparation of the bill, acceptable payment methods, means to send the bill and bill payment instrument, means of signing the bill, bill payment instrument, receipt acknowledging deposit and payment, method of recording and reconciling payments, and further actions. An accumulation of choices by the involved parties can include digital information in each step that represents all of the significant data accumulated up to and including that step. That digital data preferably includes digital signatures of each party at each step so as to provide an audit trail in purely digital form. Where digital data is chosen for each step, the digital data can be electronic or, using machine readable code, printed on paper, regardless of the form chosen in prior or later steps.